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Examining the Accommodation Experience in Historical Buildings with Content Analysis: Amasya Mansions Example

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ABSTRACT

In this study, which aims to examine online tourist comments about historical mansion hotels in Amasya, which has shown rapid development in recent years in terms of tourism activity, tourist comments on the TripAdvisor platform were used. In the research, comments on TripAdvisor regarding Amasya's mansion hotels were examined using the "word cloud technique" in two different categories: positive and negative. According to the findings obtained from the collected data, the general scores of the 10 mansion hotels operating in Amasya examined within the scope of the research are well above the average level on the TripAdvisor platform. In other words, tourists who experience mansion hotels in Amasya tend to give high scores on TripAdvisor. The most striking words that emerged in the word cloud where positive comments about Amasya mansion hotels were examined were words such as "hotel, mansion, Amasya, breakfast, room, Yeşilırmak, staff." According to the data provided with the help of the "word cloud" obtained from the negative comments about Amasya mansion hotels on TripAdvisor, the words that attract the most attention are expressions such as "noise, music, car park, and sleep."

Keywords: Historical Buildings, Accommodation Experience, TripAdvisor, Amasya

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1 Introduction

With the continuous development of technology, it has been observed that a tourist mass whose demands and expectations can constantly change has emerged. It is known that this type of tourist group is knowledgeable, researches, and constantly pursues differences. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that these tourists are moving away from mass tourism and turning to alternative types of tourism. Recent years have seen a rise in interest in the conservation and long-term viability of cultural assets, particularly in locations designated by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites due to their physical or cultural significance. As a result, cultural tourism and cultural heritage assets, which are forms of alternative tourism, have gained prominence.

Cultural heritage assets constitute one of the most important components of tourism. In developed countries, cultural heritage assets are considered a major economic resource in terms of tourism. Tourists especially visit cultural heritage sites in order to have cultural experiences in the countries they visit and create economic activity by spending there (Garrod and Fyall, 2000; Kendir, 2020a). Therefore, it can be said that tourists participating in cultural tourism have different experiences than those participating in mass tourism. The preference for small-capacity establishments like mansion hotels over high-rise hotels or hotels with a large number of rooms confirms this situation when looking at the accommodation experience.

In light of this information, the aim of the research is to examine online tourist comments about host hotels operating in Amasya province using the content analysis method. For this purpose, online comments about host hotels operating in Amasya province on the TripAdvisor platform were evaluated in two categories, positive and negative, using the "word cloud" technique. In addition, tourist comments about the mansion hotels in Amasya province are presented using a scientific method, and the points that should be highlighted and taken into consideration about the mansion hotels are emphasized. However, the fact that there is no published study to date on the accommodation experience of host hotels that continue their activities only in Amasya reveals the importance of this research.

2 Conceptual Framework

In parallel with technological development, the availability of the internet almost everywhere has enabled the easy dissemination of information. In addition to social media tools such as Facebook and X, it is important for consumers to express their opinions about various goods or services for online businesses such as Amazon and Hepsiburada. Electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) communication style brings to the fore a new source of information in production and marketing (Zhang, Li and Chen, 2012; Chang, Ku and Chen, 2019). On the other hand, comments made by consumers about goods or services on e-commerce sites where they shop can affect the purchasing decision process of many consumers, either positively or negatively (Chevalier and Mayzlin, 2006). However, as the number of internet users increases day by day, it is noticeable that online consumer comments are used as a data source for understanding and finding solutions to a number of problems in the fields of accommodation and tourism (Schuckert et al., 2015; Xiang et al., 2017).

In recent years, online travel platforms have been frequently used by tourists to share their travel experiences, especially to "recommend a tourism product or service or point out its negative aspects" (De Ascaniis and Gretzel, 2013, p. 157; Munar and Jacobsen, 2014; Cenni and Goethals, 2017). Therefore, online comments reflecting the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of tourists as a result of their experiences have become important data sources for both businesses and academics conducting tourism research (Banerjee and Chua, 2016). However, studies (Lee et al., 2011; Vasquez, 2012; Lei and Law,

2015; Molinillo et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2017; Litwin and Sobel, 2019; Arslan, 2020; Kendir, 2020b; Bagherzadeh et al., 2021; Peres and Paladini, 2021; Bozkurt, 2023) examining the impact of online comments in the tourism sector on accommodation establishments, food and beverage establishments, and destinations are frequently covered in the relevant literature.

Online sharing platforms such as TripAdvisor, Booking.com, Expedia, and Travelocity, developed especially for the tourism industry, have increased comments on consumer experiences in this sector (Xiang et al., 2017; Peres and Paladini, 2021). On the other hand, according to research by Yoo and Gretzel (2009) in the tourism industry, more than 80% of people who engage in tourism-related activities take into account the reviews posted on websites like TripAdvisor. This means that the impact of such internet-based consumer reviews is potentially powerful and far-reaching (Vasquez, 2012).

Information technology and social media have changed the way tourists search for accommodation establishments and restaurants, away from the traditional structure. Thus, tourists widely use travel review platforms to obtain information about the cuisines of the destinations they travel to, find satisfactory restaurants, and choose accommodation establishments (Rodríguez-Molina et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2017). In a study examining 68,558 comments on TripAdvisor for hotels in Florianópolis-SC, Brazil, positive and negative evaluations were determined. Within the scope of the research, the features that created the most negative evaluations were "room," "parking," and "reservation." It has been determined that features such as "location," "ambience," "staff," "breakfast," and "cost-benefit" constitute the majority of positive evaluations (Peres and Paladini, 2021). In a similar study, 940 guest comments on TripAdvisor for 10 city hotels operating in Eskisehir, Turkey, were examined, and it was determined under which categories these comments were most collected. According to the research findings, it was revealed that the comments focused on the deliciousness of the breakfast or meal, the friendliness of the staff, and the cleanliness of the rooms (Coban et al., 2019). In their study, Uçar and Kırhasanoğlu (2021) examined 520 comments of 5-star hotels operating in the Eastern Black Sea Region on the TripAdvisor platform and 1312 consumer complaints on the Şikayetvar website. As a result of the research, it was determined that the issues that received the highest complaints were food and beverage variety, discrimination in favor of foreign guests, room equipment and materials, pricing, staff attitude and behavior, and SPA, pool, and Turkish bath. When the relevant literature was examined, it was seen that online comments about modern accommodation facilities were generally examined through content analysis. On the other hand, it is known that historical buildings whose restoration has been completed operate in the tourism sector as mansion hotels. It is noteworthy that tourists who don't want to stay in contemporary hotel structures prefer historical mansions, which are significant to preserve for future generations as a source of cultural heritage in some regions of Turkey (such as Amasya, Safranbolu, and Beypazarı). However, examining the online comments of tourists staying in such buildings is an issue that should be taken into consideration in terms of both the sustainability of the building and the business.

2.1 The Tourism Potential of Amasya Province

Amasya province is located in the Central Black Sea region of Turkey, with Tokat in the east, Yozgat in the south, Samsun in the north, and Çorum in the west. Covering an area of 5,701 km2 in terms of surface area, Amasya has 6 districts (Figure 1). As of the end of 2022, the total population of Amasya province was determined to be 338,267 people (TUIK, 2023). The altitude of Amasya city center is 411 m, and the general altitude of Amasya province is 1150m. However, the altitude varies between 160 and 2061 m, depending on geography throughout the province. Amasya province, founded on the foothills of Harşena Mountain in the Yeşilırmak valley, has a historical past of approximately 8,000 years. In addition to its historical and cultural riches, Amasya attracts visitors' attention, especially with the

Yalıboyu Houses, which were built on the banks of Yeşilırmak and the majority of which have been restored (Amasya Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2023).

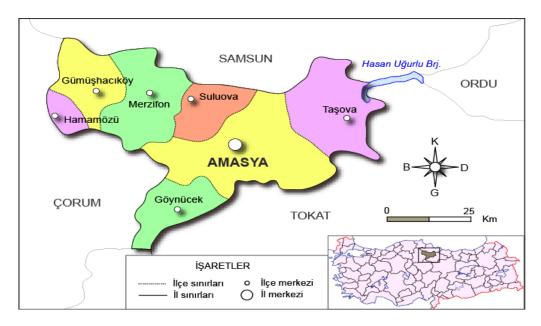


Figure 1: Location of the Study Area (Geography Map, 2023)

Amasya province, with its natural beauties and historical values, has many attractions in terms of tourism. According to accommodation statistics with business licenses between January and December 2022, the number of local and foreign tourists staying in Amasya is 188,434. It is known that historical mansions, which have been restored and serve as accommodation facilities, and hotels with operating certificates meet the accommodation needs of incoming tourists. As of November 2023, there are 21 facilities with tourism operation certificates and 54 facilities with simple accommodation operation certificates in Amasya province. In addition, 21 facilities with tourism operation certificates have 1,332 beds, and 54 facilities with simple accommodation operation certificates have 1,090 beds (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2023). The most notable tourism types in Amasya province are cultural heritage tourism, nature-based tourism, bicycle tourism, camping and caravan tourism, ornithotourism, and thermal tourism (Amasya Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2023). Figure 2 shows mansion hotels operating as accommodation establishments in Amasya.



Figure 2: Yalıboyu Houses (Amasya Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2023)

Structurally different from modern accommodation establishments, mansion hotels are preferred by tourists because of their authentic atmosphere, being a source of cultural heritage, and bearing the traces of the past. However, it should not be ignored that there may be positive as well as negative aspects in terms of guest satisfaction. From this point on, examining the positive and negative comments made about the mansion hotels in Amasya on the TripAdvisor platform is very important in terms of providing a source of information for local businesses and stakeholders.

3 Method

In this descriptive research, the data obtained from TripAdvisor were evaluated with content analysis, one of the qualitative research methods. The reason why TripAdvisor was chosen within the scope of the research is that it is one of the most comprehensive internet platforms that includes tourist and visitor experiences around the world. In terms of user statistics, TripAdvisor reached approximately 1 billion active comments and opinions worldwide in 2022 (Statista, 2023). The reason why content analysis was preferred as a method in the study is that it is a research technique that can be repeated and obtain valid results regarding the content of the data (Krippendorff, 1980, p. 25). However, content analysis is a technique in which valid interpretations within a text are revealed as a result of analysis. The comments in the texts evaluated in this method are generally about the sender of the message, the content of the message, and the receiver of the message (Weber, 1989, p. 5). Therefore, the content analysis method is quite suitable for the purpose and scope of this research. The "word cloud" technique was used to visualize the data obtained from the content analysis and make it more understandable. The purpose of visualizing data is not to make it aesthetically beautiful, but to make it understandable. Visualization provides quick information to people interested in the subject (Fronza et al., 2013, pp. 57–58).

The research population consists of hotel establishments located in historical mansions operating in Amasya city center and located on the TripAdvisor platform. The "cluster sampling" model used in content analysis studies was preferred as the sampling model in the research. This sampling model refers to the bringing together of units that are more dense in terms of content and within certain date ranges (Balcı, 2001). Within the framework of the cluster sampling model, 637 tourist comments about the top 10 host hotels that continue to operate actively in Amasya and have the most comments and opinions on TripAdvisor in the 5-year period between November 1, 2018 and October 31, 2023 constitute the sample of the research. A content analysis of the comments, especially based on experience, in the relevant restaurants was made, and the findings were presented in tables. In addition, all visitor comments and opinions within the specified date ranges were brought together, and a "word cloud" was created in the computer environment through the appropriate online program (WordArt, 2023). Thanks to this method, it is aimed at visualizing and revealing more clearly the points that visitors mention most in their experience-based comments.

4 Results

Within the scope of the findings section of the study, firstly, statistical information about the mansion hotel establishments operating in Amasya and visible on the TripAdvisor platform is included. The information in question is compiled and presented from the data on the TripAdvisor online platform (TripAdvisor, 2023).

Table 1: TripAdvisor general data of hotels in Amasya

Categories	Number of Hotels	Ratio (%)	Number of Comments	Ratio (%)
Standard Hotel	17	22,7	367	23,9
Mansion Hotel	58	77,3	1171	76,1
Total	75	100	1538	100

Source: TripAdvisor, 2023

Table 1 shows the distribution of hotels actively operating in Amasya and listed on the TripAdvisor online platform by district. It is seen that the total number of hotels on TripAdvisor that continue to operate in Amasya city center is 75. According to the table, it is noteworthy that 58 (77.3) of the hotels in Amasya city center are mansion hotel-style. In other words, the majority of hotels in Amasya operate in historical mansions. On the other hand, in terms of tourist comments on TripAdvisor, it is noteworthy that the comment rate for mansion hotels (76.1%) is much higher than that of standard hotels (23.9%).

Table 2: Most commented and rated Amasya konak hotels on tripadvisor

Mansion Hotel	Number of Comments	Score	
A	192	4,5	
В	133	4,5	
С	108	4,5	
D	84	3,5	
Е	78	3	
F	62	4	
G	54	4,5	
Н	40	4,5	
I	38	4,5	
J	35	4	
Total	824	4,19 (mean.)	

(mean → weighted mean score → number of comments x score/total number of comments)

The number of comments and weighted mean scores of the top 10 host hotels operating in Amasya city center and with the most comments on the TripAdvisor platform are shown in Table 2. On TripAdvisor, hotel experiences are scored out of "5 points." The scoring range is "lowest 1 point" and "highest 5 points." The weighted mean score of the host hotels in Table 3 is "4.19," well above the median value of 3. Accordingly, it can be stated that the host hotels in the table generally received high scores as a result of tourist experiences. Only 1 mansion hotel (E) had a medium score of 3 points. However, the other nine mansion hotels received high scores by achieving an average of over 3. However, in terms of the number of comments, it was determined that tourists entered a total of 824 comments on the TripAdvisor platform about the 10 mansion hotels in the table. This figure corresponds to the majority (70.3%) of the total mansion hotel reviews in Amasya.

Mansion Hotel	Number of Comment	Positive Comments	Negative Comments	Score
A	135	112	23	4,5
В	102	87	15	4,5
С	81	70	11	4,5
D	69	44	25	3,5
Е	65	33	32	3
F	51	38	13	4
G	43	39	4	4,5
Н	32	29	3	4,5
I	30	28	2	4,5
J	29	23	6	4
Total	637	503	134	4,17 (mean)

Table 3: Data on konak hotel comments included in content analysis

(mean → weighted mean score → number of comments x score/total number of comments)

It has been determined that some tourist comments about mansion hotels in Amasya on the TripAdvisor platform are not made only for business. Apart from mansion hotels, the city, transportation, shopping, local people, etc. Since there were comments and opinions on these issues, comments that had nothing to do with mansion hotels were eliminated. As seen in Table 3, only the comments and ratings of the host hotels were selected, and their data was analyzed. Accordingly, the weighted average scores of Amasya's 10 mansion hotels, which have the most tourist comments on the TripAdvisor platform, were "4.17" out of "5" as a result of tourist experiences. Therefore, the Amasya mansion hotels evaluated received a score well above the average score of 3. Accordingly, it can be said that the comments and scores of tourists who have experienced the mansion hotels in Amasya are mostly positive. The figures in Table 4 also reflect this. Of the 637 comments evaluated, 503 were in the positive comment category, and 134 were in the negative comment category. On the other hand, the scores of the evaluated comments in Table 4 are very close to the general scores in Table 2, providing a fair content analysis opportunity.



Figure 3: Word Cloud of Positive Reviews of Mansion Hotels in Amasya

The word cloud of positive comments about the 10 mansion hotels in Amasya with the most comments and ratings on the TripAdvisor platform is shown in Figure 3. Thanks to the word cloud technique, frequently used words in texts become more visually visible and understandable. It also allows researchers to visually present the themes determined as a result of the data they obtained (Williams et al., 2013, p. 45). The use of the word clouds is becoming more common day by day. Word clouding is a very successful technique for presenting prominent words and expressions about a research topic in an artistic and social way (Ustaoğlu, 2019).

As seen in Figure 3, in the word cloud obtained from the positive comments made about Amasya mansion hotels on the TripAdvisor platform, the most prominent words are included in large font sizes. Accordingly, the most prominent words in the positive comments about Amasya mansion hotels experienced by tourists are: It is noteworthy that there are *hotel, mansion, Amasya, breakfast, room, Yeşilırmak, staff, friendly, clean,* and *recommend.* Therefore, in the mansion hotel experience that the tourists were satisfied with, it is noticeable that they liked staying in the mansion in Amasya, having breakfast, seeing the view of the Yeşilırmak river, and the friendly behavior of the hotel owners and employees. However, it can be said that tourists like the cleanliness of mansion hotels. Looking at Figure 3, the particular emphasis on words such as room and cleaning proves this situation. On the other hand, it is also very important for tourists who have experienced the experience to express their satisfaction and recommend it to other people. This finding is thought to be very valuable for the development of tourism in Amasya.

Arrangement	Word	The Number of Repetitions	Arrangement	Word	The Number of Repetitions
1	Hotel	395	11	Thank	197
2	Mansion	347	12	Comfort	153
3	Amasya	329	13	City	138
4	Room	271	14	Place	124
5	Breakfast	267	15	Family	122
6	Staff	233	16	Nice	117
7	Friendly	230	17	Good	112
8	Clean	221	18	Service	110
9	Yeşilırmak	208	19	View	106
10	Recommend	205	20	Again	95

Table 4: The most repeated words in positive reviews of mansion hotels in Amasya

The ranking of the 20 most repeated words in positive comments about Amasya mansion hotels on the TripAdvisor platform is shown in Table 4. The table also includes the number of repetitions of words. Accordingly, the word "hotel" ranked first in positive comments with 395 repetitions. There were 347 repetitions of the word "mansion," 329 repetitions of "Amasya," 271 repetitions of "room," and 56 repetitions of "breakfast" after it. When Table 4 is examined, the fact that the most striking issue in terms of tourist comments is the hotel and the mansion is very important for the tourism sector in Amasya in an experiential sense.

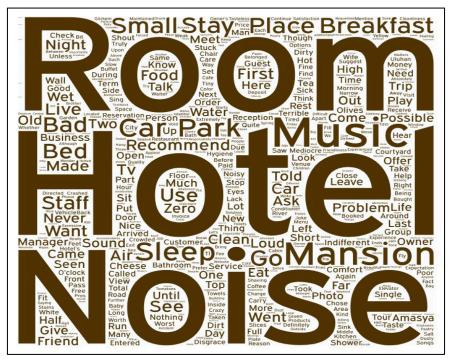


Figure 4: Word Cloud of Negative Reviews of Mansion Hotels in Amasya

The word cloud of negative comments about the 10 mansion hotels in Amasya with the most comments and ratings on the TripAdvisor platform is shown in Figure 4. As can be seen in the figure, in the word cloud obtained from the negative comments made about Amasya mansion hotels on the TripAdvisor platform, the most prominent words are included in large font sizes. Accordingly, the most prominent words in the negative comments about Amasya mansion hotels experienced by tourists are: It is noteworthy that there is a hotel, room, noise, music, car park, mansion, sleep, and breakfast. As can be seen from the prominent negative words, it can be said that tourists are disturbed by noise and music and therefore have difficulty sleeping at night. Additionally, the parking problem attracts a lot of attention in negative comments. However, it is noteworthy that tourists frequently mention words such as bed and breakfast in mansion hotels in negative comments as well as in positive comments. The reason for this may be that the mansion hotels in Amasya work with the bed and breakfast concept.

Table 5: <i>The most</i>	repeated words	ls in negative	reviews of	f mansion	hotels in Amasya
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Arrangement	Word	The Number of Repetitions	Arrangement	Word	The Number of Repetitions
1	Hotel	82	11	Place	32
2	Room	67	12	Bad	31
3	Noise	63	13	Staff	30
4	Music	55	14	Bed	28
5	Car Park	47	15	Recommend	27
6	Mansion	46	16	Want	24
7	Sleep	41	17	Never	24
8	Breakfast	38	18	Sound	23
9	Small	36	19	Use	22
10	Stay	35	20	Problem	22

The ranking of the 20 most repeated words in negative comments about Amasya mansion hotels on the TripAdvisor platform is shown in Table 5. The table also includes the number of repetitions of words. Accordingly, the word "hotel" ranked first in negative comments with 82 repetitions. This word was followed by the words "room" with 67 repetitions, "noise" with 63 repetitions, "music" with 55 repetitions, and "car park" with 47 repetitions. When Table 4 is examined, the fact that the most striking issue in negative tourist comments is "noise and music" is a situation that spoils the image of the mansion hotel experience in Amasya. On the other hand, the word "car park" also emphasizes the importance of parking for tourists who visit Amasya and are guests of the mansion hotel.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, which aims to examine online tourist comments about historical mansion hotels in Amasya, which has shown rapid development in recent years in terms of tourism activity, tourist comments on the TripAdvisor platform were used. According to the findings obtained from the collected data, the general scores of the 10 mansion hotels operating in Amasya examined within the scope of the research are well above the average level on the TripAdvisor platform. In other words, tourists who experience mansion hotels in Amasya tend to give high scores on TripAdvisor. This finding is very positive data for the most preferred mansion hotels in Amasya. On the other hand, the finding in question also coincides with the findings of a different study conducted previously on tourists in Amasya (Eryılmaz, 2020).

In the research, comments on TripAdvisor regarding Amasya's mansion hotels were examined using the "word cloud technique" in two different categories: positive and negative. First of all, in the findings of the research, it is striking that the positive comments about Amasya mansion hotels on TripAdvisor are much more than the negative comments. The most striking words that emerged in the word cloud where positive comments about Amasya mansion hotels were examined were words such as "hotel, mansion, Amasya, breakfast, room, Yeşilırmak, staff." This finding also coincides with different studies conducted on hotels in other destinations (Bayram et al., 2014; Chang et al., 2019; Bagherzadeh et al., 2021). However, unlike other studies, the Yeşilırmak river, which represents the Amasya destination, also stands out in the positive word cloud in this study. In addition, in this research and similar research, it is seen that the most important factors that tourists pay attention to in their hotel experiences are "friendly and clean." On the other hand, another noteworthy detail in the findings is that tourists who are happy to stay in the mansion hotel want to recommend it to their surroundings.

According to the data provided with the help of the "word cloud" obtained from the negative comments about Amasya mansion hotels on TripAdvisor, the most striking points are words such as "noise, music, car park, and sleep." Tourists in Amasya have a very negative perception of noise and loud sounds, especially in the city center where there are many mansion hotels. Local administrators must take precautions regarding this situation. Otherwise, the noise and loud music problem may cause damage to the entire destination, leaving a negative impression on tourists visiting Amasya. On the other hand, the parking problem at mansion hotels in Amasya is also an issue that must be addressed. Many tourists who have experienced mansion hotels complain about the parking problem in Amasya. Both restaurant operators and local government institutions have an important responsibility regarding the parking problem.

This study's limitation is that it only looks at the reviews of Amasya mansion hotels on TripAdvisor, one of the biggest websites where people can learn about tourist experiences. Another limitation in the study is the "word cloud" method, which was chosen as being most suitable for the purpose of the research. Academicians who plan to study similar subjects in the future can examine different topics

related to hotels with different techniques, taking into account the limitations in question. Therefore, this research can serve as a resource by providing guidance for similar academic studies to be conducted in the future. In addition, all stakeholders operating in the field of tourism and hotel management in Amasya province can benefit from the findings of this research.

6 Declaration

6.1 Competing Interests

There is no potential conflict of interest in this study.

6.2 Authors' Contributions

Hakan KENDİR: Collecting research data, creating the conceptual framework, and writing the conclusion section.

Emin ARSLAN: Creating the conceptual framework, editing the work, and writing the method section.

Handan ÖZÇELİK BOZKURT (Corresponding Author): Creating the conceptual framework, editing the work, translation, and language editing.

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